

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY  
REMARKS IN INTERVIEW AND AT VARIOUS OCCASIONS QUOTED IN THE PRESS  
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# Perry thanks 'brave Berliners'

## Defense chief marks end of long American presence

By RON JENSEN  
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BERLIN — American forces in Berlin, with the help of "brave Berliners," accomplished a difficult mission during the Cold War, the U.S. secretary of defense said Thursday.

"They've shown that no harder, no wall, no barrel of a gun can threaten freedom forever," William Perry said.

Perry made his remarks in a brief interview at the Berlin Brigade headquarters. He was in Berlin to take part in a series of events throughout the day marking the departure of foreign troops from the city.

Perry noted in his speech that one of his predecessors pledged 40 years ago that American troops would not leave the city until it was free and secure.

"That day has come," he said. "Berlin is whole. Germany is one. The Cold War and its nuclear threat are history."

In the early morning ceremony at Clay Headquarters, Perry received the American flag taken down the day before at a final retreat ceremony. Maj. Gen. Walter H. Yates Jr., the Berlin commander, presented him with the flag.

In a short speech, Perry said: "This is truly a historic day. On behalf of Presi-

dent Clinton and all of the American people, it is my honor to join in celebrating one of the truly great events of the 20th century and to thank the men and women who made it possible."

In other remarks, Perry echoed other U.S. officials in saying the military regime in Haiti is near an end.

"What I can say about that at this time is: The military regime in Haiti is on the way out," Perry said.

"In Germany, events this week culminate an American presence in Berlin that began on July 4, 1945, when victorious troops entered the devastated capital of a defeated Nazi Germany.

Since then, American, French, British and Russian forces have shared the city throughout a Cold War that ended when the Berlin Wall tumbled on Nov. 9, 1989,

and the city and Germany were reunited on Oct. 3, 1990. Russian troops left with great fanfare last week. Ceremonies on Thursday paid tribute to the American, French and British forces whose presence will end this month.

Perry added to that tribute, saying: "As your secretary of defense, I am proud of you. President Clinton and all of the American people thank you for the service that you have given."

Despite his hectic schedule, the secretary spent a few minutes chatting with members of the Berlin military community and some Berliners.

In a remark to Yates before leaving, Perry said, "I think this must be a unique moment in history when an occupying force leaves and the community they are leaving sheds some tears over it."